

Success Story

Genevieve Thiers, CEO & Founder
Sittercity.com
Chicago, Illinois

Illinois Young Entrepreneur Champion of the Year
National and Regional Young Entrepreneur Champion

Graduating from Boston College and Oxford University is an exciting and enlightening experience. You are young, you are full of ideas, and you are eager to set the world on fire. Why would anyone tell a budding entrepreneur that an on-line babysitting service could never work, especially during the height of the “Dot.com crash” era? Well that’s exactly what happened five years ago to Genevieve Thiers, CEO & Founder of Sittercity.com.

What her critics failed to realize was that Genevieve possessed all the traits, qualities, and experiences to make this idea work. Growing up as the oldest of seven children in her family certainly had its challenges, but it also armed Genevieve with the practical knowledge needed to fulfill her dream.

What her critics failed to realize was Genevieve had already gained invaluable experiences while working as a professional Information Developer for IBM as well as an Internet Contract Specialist for a Wharton-based Small Business Development Center.

What her critics failed to realize was Genevieve’s burning desire to succeed, and her technical expertise to execute and manage such a revolutionary idea. Besides, she had already personally posted well over 10,000 flyers across Boston and its numerous college campuses.

Built upon the models of an online dating service, Genevieve built a company that was designed to give parents their lives back. Genevieve knew if she could provide a cost effective bridge that would give parents an easier way of finding qualified and reliable babysitters, she would be successful.

Investing her own monies and following her unique business model, Genevieve was able to establish her business in Boston. Sittercity.com continued to grow, and soon it was in four cities. Knowing that she had a great idea, Genevieve wanted to continue to grow her business. Seeking the assistance of the Women’s Business Development Center (WBDC), Genevieve was able to fine tune her business model and business plan. With additional assistance of the WBDC, Genevieve was able to obtain a \$35,000 SBA loan from National City Bank. This loan helped her establish Sittercity.com in two additional cities.

However, Genevieve and WBDC really wanted to launch Sittercity.com into the national spotlight. By designing an all-encompassing business model and business plan to raise money, Sittercity.com obtained the capital needed for its expansion. Today,

Genevieve has closed her first round of equity-like funding and is currently closing a second round of funding for well over a million dollars.

Today, Sittercity, Inc. owns and operates the web's leading parent-baby online matchmaking site called sittercity.com. Although registration for the sitters is free, parents in 20 major markets pay a \$39.99 initiation fee and a \$5 monthly fee which gives them the unlimited ability to search the to search a data base of over 90,000 sitters by rate, availability special qualifications and over 30 other criteria.

As a result of its success, Sittercity.com was recognized as one of TIME Magazines Coolest Websites for 2004, and Sittercity.com received a Webby Worthy Award for 2005. Genevieve has also been featured by CNN, Bloomberg, ABC, CBS, NBC, Wall Street Journal, CLTV, Chicago Tonight, WXRT, WNUR, Real Simple, Boston Herald, Newsday, Cleveland Plain Dealer, Washington Post, San Francisco Post, and Fox.

But her accomplishments just don't stop there! Genevieve is currently writing a book on childcare alternatives for parents called Childcare: The Frantic Parent's Field Guide due out in 2006.

In addition to her degrees from Boston College and Oxford University, Genevieve holds a master's degree in opera performance from Northwestern University. Trained as an opera singer since she was ten years old, this soprano has traveled through five countries as soloist and has performed in eight professional musical theater and opera productions. Genevieve has also used her business experience to launch another company called OperaModa, a company that features young artist in the Chicago area.

Given her unstoppable talent and zest for life, it is no surprise that Genevieve Thiers is "sitting pretty" as the National 2006 SBA Young Entrepreneur of the year.